Beginning of

The meaning and value of personality

This title was preceded by

An integrated program of religious education in the Church for middle adolescents

The meaning of salvation through Christ

Hyksos : the part they played in the history of the Near East with special relation to Palestine

The contribution of Isaiah to Hebrew theology

The logos doctrine of Justin Martyr : especially as related to Platonism

Search by above titles on archive.org to continue reading this collection of Pacific School of Religion Theses from 1933 call number Thesis Cage 1933 v.2

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025 with funding from
Graduate Theological Union

https://archive.org/details/meaningvalueofpe00unse

The Meaning and Value of Personality

Bernard Darwin Treaster
A. B. College of the Pacific, 1929
M. A. Pacific School of Religion, 1930

Thesis
submitted in the department
of Christian Theology in
partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree
of Bachelor of Divinity in
the Pacific School of Religion
1933

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

I. THE MEANING OF PERSONALITY

1. Conditions within the social order call for an understanding of personal individual activities.

2. Interest in personality comes from practical situations and not from theory.

3. Meaning of personality discovered in the need within individual lives.

4. The meaning of personality must include all of its attributes.

5. The necessity of knowing the contributing factors within the popular psychology of the day.

II. PERSONALITY IN THE LIGHT OF PSYCHOLOGY

1. The popular psychologies: Freudianism and Behaviorism.

2. Discussion of the effect of these psychologies upon the realization of personality.

3. The validity of the necessity of transendence in individual personality.

4. The hampering of personality by Mechanism and Humanism and popular theories in psychology.

5. The inability of psychology to understand the full meaning and value of personality.

6. The necessity of the inclusion of an idealistic philosophy to understand life.

III. THE CONTRIBUTION OF PHILOSOPHY TOWARDS THE UNDERSTANDING OF PERSONALITY

1. Present popular conceptions in philosophy are likely to be incomplete because of the exclusion of the "otherness" factor.

2. The necessity of the inclusion of the idea of God.

3. The idea of God must be personal.

4. The idea of God interpreted in respect to the evolving nature of personality.

5. The aid of mysticism in the understanding of the evolving nature of God and man.

6. Mysticism must be aided by the use of will and effort upon the part of man.

7. Without effort in moral realms personality retrogrades.

8. Value in personality rests in the ability of mankind and individuals to adjust themselves to better purposes and objectives within the social order.

9. The accomplishment of better adjustments can only be realized through the fullest appreciation for and use of personality values.

IV. CONCLUSION

I.

The Meaning of Personality

The Meaning and Value of Personality

Introduction

One cannot long live in the present order of existence without realizing the ever present cry of distress with its plea for relief from the many difficulties which press down upon mankind. Man is no longer sure of his economic status, he is worried about his future place in the social order.— A social order which may be entirely different in many respects from the order into which he was born and reared. The concern of man does not cease with the above mentioned perplexities. Great enough would be his task of finding himself in these alone. Many men seem to be losing trust in themselves and the very purpose of their existence. The danger involved in losing oneself is even greater than that of losing ones economic status and social stability. The danger rests in the fact that if one loses his grasp on those principles which make his very existence tolerable and purposeful, he tends to lose faith in all realms including faith in his religion and his God.

The something which we all need in life must have the assurance of time stability, with a vision of those necessary satisfactions which will contribute to such an underlying

stability. As one becomes more involved in the affairs of the social order in which we are living he is ever conscious of the host of suggestions offered in the readjustment process. In and through all of this it is not difficult to see that any satisfactory adjustment to more successful living must come through some type of individual and collective personality adjustment. In the realm of personality, when one takes the trouble to seek for truth unbiassed by the clutter of psudeo-cures, one will realize that this thing we call personality is after all the most stable force in human life. Personality adjustments may do most in the reaching of a solution for our difficulties.

Because of my own interest in what has grown until it has become in an ever increasing sense a part of myself, I wish to present in this thesis what seems to be the "Meaning and Value of Personality". It will be my purpose to attempt to show what, to me at least, seems to be the place the growth and understanding of personality may play in the life of the individual and of society.

The Meaning of Personality

Recently we have noticed a steady growing interest in the entire conception of personality and personality characteristics. This has been true in many areas of thought other than psychology and philosophy, it has, however, been no less true in these realms of thinking. When one is keen to the trends of thought in the common spheres of industry, economics, politics, and sociology one finds an increasing interest in the place of personality and the part personality achievement plays in all walks of life.

It is not difficult to convince ourselves that the interest in personality from the above areas of thought comes from life situations where the validity of personality achievement or the lack of personality achievement is felt in a real way. The study of the meaning of personality comes into recent psychological and philosophical study with a new vitality. Strange to say this new vitality does not come from the older form of theorizing as to the abstract nature of personality any more than does the proper adjustment of an economic order come from speculation on the stock market. Our first and foremost statement as to the meaning of personality is that if any meaning is to

be found for personality it must be discovered in life situations rather than in amy realm of technical speculative theorizing.

If the meaning of personality be found in life the discovery must be made in individual lives. It is taken for granted that life is of both a physical and mental nature. We, however, cannot forget that life has as a third aspect, spirituality and a capacity for "transfinite" expansion. Without any attempt to discredit the place of the physical in its reactions, upon the mental and spiritual nature, we must contend that, under normal conditions, insofar as the personality problem of individual life is concerned our main interest must be in the inter-relationship of the mental processes (psychology) and the spiritual processes (religious philosophy). The part philosophy plays in the attempt to understand the meaning of personality is of a practical nature. The contribution that psychology and religion makes can only adequately be explained through the medium of philosophical thought and interpretation.

If an attempt is made at grasping what is of worth in the endeavor of interpreting the meaning of personality, not only an understanding as to the definite objective is necessary, but, also a reasonable evaluation of personality is imperative. Because of the fact that we cannot begin to

understand personality unless we have some conception of mental processes, we have often failed in our attempt at clarity in the discussion of the term. This may be due to the fact that too often in our discussion of "mind" either in the abstract or in the concrete (in philosophical thought) we have failed to realize that after all "mind" is colored by the human individual. Again in our study of psychology we have often forgotten that a complete understanding of the individual is impossible without taking into account the validity of the "transfinite" self expressed in the life of the individual.

The validity of the two above mentioned facts must be taken into our consideration if we are to find the meaning of personality in life and evaluate its worth through its contribution to life. This will facilitate a better understanding of our problems. One can begin either with the study of the "transfinite" or with the study of the purely psychological attributes of the human individual. It is interesting to notice that the place one gives to these two aspects as of "first importance" tends to classify the person's interpretation. That is, it tends to make him either a mystic in the interpretation of personality or a psychological humanist. Perhaps much of the too often over-apparent misunderstanding between humanists and mystics in

personality study could be better explained if one could analyse the person's feeling as to which of these two aspects holds first importance in his mind. Those who appear to be overenthusiastic in looking at personality from the psychological humanistic viewpoint alone tend to limit the meaning of the term as well as to limit the possible growth of personality. To my way of thinking, personality is "transfinite". It looks through mental processes and sees in the individual a validity for a larger realm of greater personality possibilities. It is a part of, but, yet beyond mere human psychology and analysis. (1)

Personality must be explained in a more adequate way than by the sole use of psychology for the reason that we draw upon categories which can be neither defined nor discovered by popular methods of discovery in the field of psychology. I am upheld in this contention by a number of psychologists who are beginning to feel that psychology after all is not the summum bonum". (2) A challenging

---

(1) Lotze seems to better explain my meaning when he says, "in man is the microcasm which reflects the macrocasm, the dew drop which mirrors the sky." Vaughn: The Significance of Personality.

(2) Reference may be made to the following:
Dewar and Hudson: Psychology for Religious Workers

characteristic of personality is that an evolving process is characteristic of it by nature. In other words it cannot by its very nature ever become static. If an individual allows his personality to retrograde that personality loses both its value and its meaning. Because of this evolving nature, personality is as much influenced by what might be called future attainments as it is by what has already been achieved in personality values. In other words personality is largely molded by an individual's ~~idea ls~~ ideals, goals, hopes, wishes and the very momentum of personality achievement, as much as by his psychological individual type. Note may well be taken of the following discussion on this point.

> "The idea of personality to which we should adhere will include all stages of life with the place the individual finds himself in the entire evolving process of personality. The 'man of the street' must have as much a place in the economy of the universe, in the satisfactory solution of his problems, as does the man who is so intellectually developed as to understand the implications psychology makes as to his inhibitions and possibilities. Even though men differ in their abilities we must not for an instance out of fairness to individuality and out of respect for our conception of both religion and God, allow the dulling of the challenge of

---

Groves
~~Dashiell~~: Personality and Social Adjustment
~~Dashiell~~: ~~Personality and Individual Differences~~
Skinner, Gast, and Skinner: Readings in Educational Psychology

Fox: Educational Psychology
Weatherhead: Psychology in the Service of Souls.

visions, ideals and goals, to individual lives because of inabilities in individual cases. Even though the sun does not shine as brightly through stained glass windows as it does through clear glass, it does shine through stained glass and its warmth is felt." (1)

Such an interpretation of the idea of Personality cannot be fully measured by our present psychological tools and the analytical method. For this reason those who follow Freud and Jung to their conclusions cannot possibily understand the entire meaning or value of personality. Because of these aspects of personality which are ever ahead of the finite human being, (although at the same time vitally a part of the individual), there is a certain vital part of the individual which is "transfinite" and can only be explained under that category.

Before we approach the main sections of our thesis it is, then, important to hold certain ideas in mind as to the meaning of personality. Personality can only be defined and understood in its relation to life, individual lives first, then, these lives in a collective sense. This life-centered interest makes of the entire study of personality something vital and virile. This is true because interest in the subject is then taken away from the purely speculative.

---

(1) Contributed to "The Idea of Personality", a special study made by the author of this Thesis in a Seminar of Religious Education for Methodist ministers at Stockton, California January, 1933.

When we realize the two vital realities in the meaning of personality, namely, the purely psychological aspect and the mystical validity of what is "transfinite," we are brought to a sane approach to the understanding of the entire problem. The meaning of personality is nothing short of the meaning of life. Life understood in all of its splendor is required for the appreciation of all that lies in personality.

II.

Personality in the Light of Psychology

Personality in the Light of Psychology

Accepting the theory that personality can only be understood in terms of life, and most clearly ascertained in the definite response to life situations, we are forced, by the nature of our definition, to turn our attention to an understanding of the term "life". We take for granted the large place played in life by the knowledge given to us of its physical, mechanical, and biological aspects. We recall, of course, the contributions made to life in these realms. It should also be made clear that while discussing those aspects which are mental and spiritual we need to recall that the physical, mechanical, and biological parts of life affect the possible growths and inhibitions in the mental and spiritual realms.

In those phases which have to do with mental and spiritual categories of individuality there has been much contention in the attempt to associate, or disassociate, as the case may be, the nature of personality in psychological study. After an earnest attempt to understand both of the terms psychology and personality one must decide for himself which is the more inclusive term.

The suggestion has already been made that personality implies the life of the individual in relation to both the

mental and "transfinite" attitudes. If one is to know personality at its best, he must make a place for the validity of the individual "self" aspects. In order then, to make our statements in this section of the thesis consistent with those in section I we must include within our definition an appreciation of an adequate description of "self" and selfhood. There are those who would not attempt to define personality in less than the highest terms of "self theories". (1) There are, however, outstanding psychologists who would readily take issue with this. Chief among them is John Dewey. In view of his general theory of education and the place there given to realities in the realm of personality values, the following statement seems inconsistent. "All habits are demands for certain types of activity; they constitute the self - - - are the sole agents of observation, recollection, foresight, and judgment; a mind or conscience or soul in general which performs these operations is a myth. Concrete habits do all the perceiving, and reasoning that is done." (2) With such a challenge we can do no less, as we proceed, than to

---

(1) Note "Self theories" in Hugh Hartshorne, Character in Human Relations, Chapt. 13.

(2) Dewey, John: Human Nature and Conduct, pp. 25, 176-7.

look with all fairness at those chief motivations, the autocrats of our business of living, namely; habits and concrete habits!

All do not agree with the stand that Dewey has taken in the above quotation. When speaking of sentiments Shand gives a high place to the concept of self. He says, "These are our many selves; but, there is also our one 'self'. This enigmatical self reflects on these systems, estimates them, and however loathe to do it, sometimes chooses between their ends, seems to be the central fact of our personality." (1) This would clearly indicate that there are those of high standing in the study of psychology who do not agree with the contentions of Dr. Dewey in respect to personality characteristics. Hartshorne makes the meaning a little clearer in respect to the place of self and personality. He reminds us that a "person is a self and has a character." (2)

From the quotations made it would seem that in our study of "personality in the light of psychology" one of the most logical places to start would be with those

---

(1) Shand, A. F.: The Foundations of Character. pp. 66.67.

(2) Hartshorne, Hugh: Character in Human Relations, p. 182.

fields in psychology which deal with habits and character.

In the psycholcgical study of habit we can find no more prominent conceptions in our day than those advocated by the Freudian school, with the many deviations which have been made from Freud's original conceptions. In order to appreciate the popularity of the conceptions drawn from this type of thinking we need but consider the rapid appearance of all types of endeavor in the fields of psycho-pathology, psychiatry, and the psycho-analytical movements; to say nothing of the great amount of "Quackery" which has associated itself with these more or less legitimate fields. If, as Dewey implies, habit is the guiding factor in life and individual habits are the ~~judge~~ *directors* of our motives as well as our goals, it behooves those who are interested in any attempt at the discovery of personality to consider what is being accomplished in this popular movement of the day. What is the influence which the Freudians hold upon those characteristics which are so much a vital part of personality? What is the implication which they bring to this field of interest through their contribution to our understanding of habit, aspiration, goals, and the central guiding factor of life, namely, the soul?

To say that Freudianism is satisfactorily adequate for the better understanding of the personality of the

individual would be, at least in a small way, to pleasantly satisfy the "wish" concept of the Freudians in this realm. Many followers of Freud contend for the satisfaction of personality adjustments through their theories. To say this is a "wish" concept on their part is to state the situation mildly.(1) If the theories of Freud and his disciple Jung could accomplish what they anticipate for individual personality our problem would be adequately met. Fortunately I do not stand alone in my contention that the entire process, with the implications lying in the background of the theories of the psycho-analytical method, is not only inadequate in its scope, but, even false in many of its contentions. The method is inadequate in so far as it does not reach its desired end in the process of synthesis. This is true because the methods of analysis and synthesis used by Freudianism do not take into consideration all that should be implied in any adequate study of either individuality or personality.

One needs only to turn to the constructive contributors, to their attempt to understand human nature, in order to find a general agreement upon the fact that the guiding

---

(1) Holt, E. B.: The Freudian Wish, and
Hingley, R. H.: Psychoanalysis.

factors which move life have a unifying principle behind them. It is no novel idea that those who have contributed the most in the evolution of human society have acknowledged this fact. Examples are sufficient to show that those who purposefully deny the reality of this unifying principle have to a more or less degree failed in their effort to give a truly constructive contribution to the better understanding of human individuality. Natural scientists are largely in agreement upon the fact that in physics, chemistry, and biology there is some unifying factor which works in and through the various sectors of these individual fields of science. Some have called this steadiness of principle which unifies into understandable laws: electricity; others, energy; some, the unknown quality, and still others scientists call it the soul of reality. It remains for some who pride themselves most in their achievement within this infant science, psychology, to flatly deny any such existence. They attribute such types of thinking to individual habits, individual entities lying wholly within the realm of either the subconscious or the conscious mind. They forget that the scientific method in the field of natural science and the very method which they pride themselves on possessing, discredits habit in investigation and relies upon an analytical method which respects all logical

discoveries.

The only unifying factor which can exist to the Freudian is the "censor" in an individual mind. This "censor" is the governing factor in life. Any fair minded person will, after careful observation, notice that the powers of the "censor" are limited. It cannot step out, so to speak, and make any new worthy contribution towards individual personality progress because of the fact that (by their own admission) the Freudians contend that habit (either conscious or subconscious) furnishes the materials upon which the "censor" works and passes its judgments. Those judgments, then, can only be selections from an accumulation of habits. This entire trend of thought smells of the earth, earthy. It is fanciful to say the least. I quote some contentions which will indicate the total ignorance of this School of any conception of the "otherness" in life.

> " - - - - if the unit of mind and character is a 'wish'; it is easy to perceive how it is incorporated. It is this 'wish' something which the body as a piece of mechanism can do. If then the wishes are the soul - - - - - soul is indeed the antelechy." (1)

True to what might have been our previous contention the entire 'wish' concept with its colorful Freudian idea

---

(1) Holt, Op. cit., p. 48.

of the "censor" attempts to give (with all assumption of the adequate) an interpretation of what we are supposed to consider as being a sufficient soul for the satisfactory progress of the individual personality. While Dewey (1) gives habit the prestige of a guide, and relegates all other outside influences to the "mythical", we find that Holt is not inclined to be so frank. Interpreting a 'wish' as a soul, Holt makes the following statement,

> "It is this 'wish' something which the body can do; a course of action with regard to the environment which the machinery is capable of carrying out. - - - Here the reader may raise the query - 'Carry out without the directing influence of an intelligent soul?' To this I will ask the reader to accept provincially the answer - Yes, without. (Underlined Holt's) But this because the question as raised, although familiar, is meaningless. We are not coming to a psychology without a soul, (Underlined mine) unless by soul one means' ghost soul. Quite on the contrary, Freud's is actually the first psychology with a soul." (2)

Such an interpretation of the soul seems inadequate. Any definition of the term must include more. Hall endeavors to define Soul without any respect (seemingly) for the part philosophy plays in the comprehension of the whole of life, and, with a biased understanding of "mind Science"

---

(1) Dewey, John: Human Nature and Conduct, pp. 176-7
(2) Holt, ~~R.~~ op cit., p. 48.

(psychology). He seems either to lack any knowledge of individuality, or, purposefully to ignore a consideration of all the facts in his estimation of the soul. To my thinking the latter seems to be the case. He says,

> "If, however, we inquire in what way the reflexes are combined or 'integrated' into more complicated processes, we shall be led in exactly the opposite direction of synthesis, and here we soon come, as is not surprising, to synthetic novelty. This is specific response or behavior. - - - - - And the advent of specific response is a sufficiently critical point to merit detailed examination, since it is the birth of awareness and therewith of psychology itself." (1)

Such a definition of soul and of ability (or should we say, lack of ability?) in the personality of an individual not only betrays a very mechanistic conception of psychology but it has, as well, certain other implications which have significance in the philosophy of life. There is a direct relation between the Freudian psychology and those systems of philosophy which have been so prevalent in our day, namely Mechanism and Humanism. We shall refer to this more fully later.

From the foregoing it can easily be seen that to the Freudia n mind there can be no place for a concept of personality which gives recognition to the "otherness",

---

(1) Holt, Op. cit., pp. 51-2.

or the "transfinite", in life. The unifying force in life is reduced to the guiding of habits by a "censor" which in turn is merely guided in its choices by the environment in which it finds itself. One is a Hottentot or a civilized man depending entirely on his environment. This influence cannot be admitted, but, such a method of psychological interpretation fails to give any account which will satisfy the question of why we have not stayed in those lower levels of society, or of what makes the lower types dissatisfied with their level of attainment. This popular theory in psychology wholly fails to see that the environment in which we live has something in it besides habits. It has particular hopes and ambitions, aspirations which are unique in the individual. These characteristic realities are as much a part of the person as are those habits, repressions, and attempted sublimations of which psycho-analysis speaks.

The individual man is a personality. As we have indicated, "man is a person and has a character". First of all he is a person that has judgments and habits learned by a selection of his better habits. A mere "censor" is not big enough, nor does it include all of the person who in reality is a living progressive personality. Freudian-ism, then, may be considered only as a partial psychology

of life. We grant that it may have merit, but, because of its inability to include all factors in the study of mental and personal life, it, by its very inadequacy brands itself false in the solution of personality and individuality attainments.

Freudianism fails because of its lack of inclusion of necessary factors which give it the ability to make any attempt at synthesis. We may have insight enough to analyse but if we cannot synthesize, or, build up personal achievements, life is barren.

Life cannot be built into a harmonious whole without a sense of the "self", the otherness of a person's individuality. One cannot answer the general question before us in this thesis, that of the "meaning and value of personality", unless he takes into account all of the attributes of personality. Any psychology which does not include all of the thinking of the individual is inadequate and false. This cannot be done unless we give its full place to the soul. Out interpretation of the soul must include those elements which lead to universality of principle. This tends to individual life on the higher levels of achievement. At the outset, one admits defeat in his attempt to accomplish the higher realms of personality, unless he has a philosophy of life which gives place

to such "self" development.

Many psychologists, in an attempt to make their study a "pure science", unadulterated by "ghost souls" and "mythology", ignore, in so far as it is possible, the implications of philosophy. They are so busy attempting to dress psychology in a coat which resembles the Natural Science method that they forget that the very nature of the subject matter, the study of the mind, recognizes some philosophical connections. The questions "Why?" and "How?" must be asked and answered. Whitehead clearly sets before us the place of philosophy in life.

> "Philosophy is the self correction by consciousness of its own initial excess of subjectivity. Each actua l occasion contributes to the circumstances of its original additional formulative elements deepening its own particular individuality. Consciousness is only the last and greatest of such elements by which the selective character of the individual obscures the external totality from which it originates and which it embodies. An actual individual, of such higher grade, has truck with the totality of things by their sheer actuality, but it has attained its individual depth of being by a selective emphasis limited to its own purposes. The task of philosophy is to recover the totality obscured by the selection." (1)

Whitehead indicated that a higher stage (or grade) of individuality can be accomplished only by a selective process. He contends that it is "the task of philosophy

---

(1) Whitehead: Process and Reality, p. 22-.

to recover the totality obscured by the selection". Granting a place for the science of psychology, it may, then, be fairly added that advancement in the knowledge of personality it impossible without an adequate philosophical interpretation of life. Since philosophy is necessary for the understanding of life, we cannot adequately understand "personality in the light of psychology" unless we have a philosophy prior to psychology, and in the fore of psychology, to guide and direct our psychological theories and findings. Without this our psychological advancement is hampered by the very fact that it is not inclusive of all realms of the human mind.

It is my contention that some of the apparent reasons for the present state of unrest are to be found in our inadequate half psychologies. Coming out of philosophical conceptions which have been overthrown by the best of minds as antiquated, a psychology has sprung up which bases its wide popularity upon the false contention that it is truly scientific. This psychology in turn has begotten newer and more popular philosophical systems which have largely molded our actions. Starting from an inadequate, discarded philosophical position, passing through a partial psychology (which does not include all the realities in life), we find a new philosophy which is

blinded by its very heritage from seeing all the true factors in life. Accepted by the popular mind and molded into the structure of civilization this philosophy becomes the underlying force which interprets men's actions in the fields of economics, sociology, industry and politics. Because of the inadequacy of half truths, psychological and philosophical, it is impossible to satisfactorily interpret life. The crash in our present social order makes its appearance in tangible things, the difficulties rema in because of our loss of ability to see the wholeness in life which takes into account those intangible forces that society has either deliberately or carelessly forgotten.

The teaching of Mechanism and Humanism has largely been at fault for the present crisis. This is true because of their adherance, whether consciously or not, to skeptical materialistic concepts of human individuality. The forces which have very cleverly tied the older Materialism to the Mechanism and Humanism of our day undoubtedly have been Freudian and Behavioristic psychologies. We are then bound by the very seriousness of our situation to gain for ourselves the values lost to society through false teachings. Let us once again see the realities

which we have so foolishly called "myths".

We shall find, in the next section just how false ideas have twisted men's lives into a tangle and just how truer ideas may yet save the situation.

The Contribution of Philosophy Toward the Understanding of Personality

At every turn of life, we can see poor adjustments which have been made in individual personality achievement through the use of the foregoing psychologies and philosophies. The cause of the present restlessness is not of a surface nature. It is deeply rooted in the interpretation given to underlying principles. Walter lippmann senses this fact and reveals the perplexity in individual lives.

> "In the free play of his (modern man's) uninhibited instincts he does not find any natural substitute for those accumulated convictions which, however badly they did it, nevertheless organized his soul, economized his effort, consoled him, and gave him dignity in his own eyes because he was part of the greater whole." (1)

Because the Mechanistic and Behavioristic interpretations of life contend for man's self-sufficiency by painting him in fanciful colors as one who is independent of any outside aid, there has quickly spread a lack of a need of any relationship between himself and the "greater whole" of life. Dignity in life and consolation in an

---

(1) Lippmann, Walter: Preface to Morals, p. 19.

individual effort toward betterment have largely been lost because of the over-estimation of the sufficiency of mankind itself. This is directly due to erroneous psychological and philosophical contentions.

Although Lippmann gives an admirable insight into present difficulties in life, he does not offer a solution which may be considered significant. Reasons for this may be found in the very shallowness of his philosophy of life. This occurs where competent interpretation of the vital principles and realities is shunned. Lippmann fails, as do many others of his like, to give real aid. Their Humanistic interpretations are, after all, only part truths. The lameness in Lippman's idea of God would tend to brand him as a popular, superficial thinker. Attention may be called to the following.

> "I should be the last to deny that a man may, if he chooses, think of God as the source of all that seems to him worthy in human experience. This highly sophisticated idea of God is employed by modern man who would like to say, but cannot say with certainty, that there exists a personal God to whom men must accomodate themselves." (1)

The uncertainty with which Lippmann holds to a belief in a personal God, (or any God at all, for that matter)

---

(1) Lippmann, Walter: Op. Cit., p. 22.

may appear attractive to the lay mind, but only so because the popular thought has become saturated with ideas advanced by those who claim to have a knowledge of philosophy and psychology, but, who, in truth, leave out the very foundation principles of any sould theory. The popularity of approval given to Lippmann and others of his calibre can only be accounted for as the culmination of erroneous theories. Indeed it may be an increasingly accepted custom to hold a cynical attitude toward any concept of God, but, again, the acceptance of a too popular theory may be an indication that the idea may either be false or only partly true. Be that as it may, life without a theistic belief is maimed in its appreciation for and achievement of personality values. The very source of personality is the inclusive nature of the soul. Any idea of the soul is meaningless without a concept of God, which includes the personal attributes of deity.

Lippmann portrays in a vivid manner the unsatisfying nature of the attitudes of life without theistic belief. The harshness of the seeming necessity of resigning oneself to events without finding any value in them is the deplorable state in which man finds himself today.

> "For the modern man who has ceased to believe, without ceasing to be credulous, hangs, as it were, between heaven and earth, and is at rest nowhere.

III.

The Contribution of Philosophy Toward the Understanding of Personality

> There is no theory of the meaning and value of events which he is compelled to accept, but he is no less compelled to accept the events." (1)

However much we may disdain the idea of compulsion in life, the very fact that we must accept its circumstances, forces us, ~~in~~ by reason of the reality of life itself, to accept some theory which will read value and meaning into events. We are thus, by the very legitimacy of our very existence, "compelled", whether we wish it or not. Any attempt, therefore, at stability without a theory capable of lifting man out of his deplorable state of mind, is impractical. Man in his own strength, either individually or collectively, can transcend himself only through a realization of the validity of an "otherness", linked through relationship to that "otherness", or God.

The pattern made up of the "best traits" in society is inadequate because it does not include the entire facts of existence.

> "It is evident that life becomes distracted and tiresome if it is not illuminated by communion with what William James called, 'a wider self through which saving experience comes'." (2)

This "saving experience" which comes through appreciation of the "wider self" is meaningless and powerless

---

(1) Lippmann, Walter, Op. Cit., p. 9.
(2) Ibid, p. 18.

without theism, that is a definite relation to the personality of God. The experience which reads into life objective value cannot come through an addition of human personality traits. The solution of the problem of unrest with the accompanying situation of the pathetic nature of being which is compelled to accept events without the ability to evaluate them, cannot be attained by the man who has no sense of a constant surety of the reality of God. Kindled hopes and aspirations are very necessary to life. These cannot possibly exist without a sense of security, if not within one's own being, then within one's conception of God and the universe. For the reason that this is true loss and the waste of energies of an individual life and of society have come. There has been an inability to see the worth and reality of existence.

Such loss has been made possible, to my way of thinking, through the lack (be it either intentional or because of inability) of certain psychologists and philosophers to appreciate the value of the "otherness" and the seeming intangible realities outside of human individual mental tra its and biological structure. This entire attitude has found its way into industry and into the social order. Such leaders of popular thought as Lippmann and Will Durant, captivated by the attractive lure of fundamentally

incomplete psychologies and philosophies of life, are merely the products of what have been accepted theories which have, without criticism, been elevated to near facts through frequent repetition in classroom and lecture platforms.

Business relationships have also been influenced by pseudo-philosophies. There, because of the false ability attributed to human individuality, is found the theory of personal rights carried to the extreme of individual license, or of one man's rights over another's. Selfishness, greed and their accompanying ills soon creep into life where the restraint of ideals, righteousness and the entire category of personality characteristics are ~~void~~ not present.

Moral restraint deteriorates when personality is not considered necessary as a guiding factor in either individual or collective life. This degeneration causes, in turn, the many ills which allow the machine to govern man and not man to govern the machine. Why should man govern Mechanism when man himself is only an individual machine, all self-sufficient and powerful within himself? If man's mind is nothing more than the component parts of a machine which react under definite stimuli in a set way, and, if man's philosophy of life is either purely Mechanistic (or Humanistic) it is easy to see why our social

order has so readily fallen before the many frailities which have become a part of its structure. If individual conceptions are weak, then, social vision will undoubtedly become blinded to the point of inadequacy.

Incompetent interpretations, then, seem to lie at the bottom of many of life's difficulties. Our task is not to go back to older ideas and theories, but, to seek a psychology and a philosophy which will give us a vision of life in its entirety.

Building upon this we may safely construct an interpretation of the meaning of life that will save us from unrest, boredom and the diseases of the social order which now seem to have most of society in their grasp.

In building a constructive interpretation of the meaning of life, our first contention is for a true intimacy between a theistic conception of the universe and the individuality of man. God and man are related in a peculiar way. This relation in the past has been interpreted by a creedalism which holds for our day little practical value. The value of any conception of God must be interpreted in the light of its successful, idealistic contribution to the welfare of mankind. Our concepts of both God and man must, of necessity, take into account

the spiritual kinship which exists between God and man.

This kinship can fittingly be expressed by appreciation for the likeness between God and the best of the attributes of mankind, rather than despair at the hopeless difference between them. One must view with apprehension any theory which would separate the relationship between God and man. The method by which we may hope to aid mankind in proper adjustments is not through the unbalanced elevation of our theories about God or man. The Behavioristic and Humanistic interpretation too far divorces God from human relationships. On the other hand the Barthian and like movements appear unbalanced because of their underevaluation of personal possibilities. Any satisfactory interpretation then of God must associate Him closely with man. The theories in psychology and philosophy which do not accomplish this are entirely incompetent because of their incompleteness. In the practical field of man's life these theories promote malajustment rather than true association.

The way in which God and man can be related in order to contribute to wholeness of life is through their spiritual similarity. This spiritual kinship of God and man cannot be understood by purely intellectual analytical means. When such an attempt is made one finds

himself in a confussion which cannot be solved until an element of mystical reality is included. An attempt to understand the spiritual relationship which exists between God, and man, by intellectual processess alone leads one into one or two difficulties. The first is the fact that through intellect alone one must either hold that God is complete i.e. perfection, or, that God is so hampered by the understanding which we have of human personality as to be limited to our form of personality. To understand God as having completely accomplished perfection after man's evolving type, is to conceive man as at sometime or other able to surpass the perfection of God. The attempt to rationalize the nature of God and man in this manner has had a noticeable effect upon the practical living of mankind.

The "old man" conception of God and the conception of God as absolute has also failed to satisfy man. In no small degree man has deserted that type of a God. The unfortunate effect is that so many have failed to seek out any other interpretation of God. As far, then, as they are concerned they are left without a God concept. The malajustment which comes into the life of an individual without any concern for God, is in itself a strong indication of failure in an individual's relation to the social order.

The second difficulty which makes itself apparent in the rationalization of the relationship between God and man appears when we attempt to understand God only by the ideas which we hold relative to human personality characteristics. If God can only be interpreted by what we know as human personality, then, is God in that degree limited in his ability to aid mankind. This is true because this concept of God offers no challenging, aspiring idealism, towards which the personality of man may strive. The impractibility of an absolute God, in the sense of completed static perfection, and the impracticability of a God limited by what we can intellectually know of him through the best of our own personality achievement can readily be seen.

Rationalization as to the nature of God is not sufficient for the explanation of the character of God, nor of the character and personality of man for that matter. We must, for the proper understanding of our problem, turn to a nother principle of interpretation. It is upon this interpretation that the entire explanation of the "meaning and value of personality"rests. The reality of mysticism and the mystical experience must be considered.

The method of the mystic cannot be explained but its

practicability for arriving at the center of the solution of personality problems can be ascertained. Howard L. Brinton gives us an insight into the way in which mystic reality can be realized.

> "The mystic solves the problem, not as the idealist by reducing reality itself to a greater world of ideas, but by brushing shadows aside and uniting with reality in a single indivisible experience, a single experience which becomes the subject-object distinction." (1)

If one is capable of using this method he at once sees the implication for the reality of the "transfinite" of the "otherness" qualities in his own life. More than this he reads into the very idea of God, His transendance of that which we infer when we think of the personality of God only in human personality attributes. The entire theory gives to man the greatest of possible aids in the process of his own personality adjustments. This saves one from boredom and restlessness. It gives him respect for his own reality and aids him in the association of his life with the life of One that is greater than himself. It not only aids him in the realization that this "something", or God, is greater than himself but this God offers challenging adventure for the one who would seek Him. The

---

(1) Brinton: The Mystic Will, p. 16.

truth of this is apparent when man realizes that even God has not achieved finality, and that his own personality adventure is challenging to Him. Such a reality as this can only be understood by the mystic who realizes that he has a kinship to God through the very fact that the personality of God is growing just as surely as is the personality of man. To be led as a personality by One who is constantly evolving above man's possible conception of Him so as to constantly challenge man, no matter to what hights he may attain, is inspiring.

A mystic knows the reality which rests in the fact that both man and God have an "otherness", a transendence of personality, which establishes a kinship between them. This kinship is of course likeness of kind. Man and God are only different in degree. However this difference of degree is thought by some to be so great that it approaches if not in fact reaches a difference in kind. Personality is then an evolving process. We can only understand its meaning in accordance with this term. We shall realize its value in human life only in this manner.

The democracy of this theory can easily be seen. There is hope for mankind and neither man nor civilization can actually be lost. The despair which possesses many in our day of both individual salvation and the salvation

of the future society is by the very existence of worth in personality, an erroneous idea. Each individual is in a very real sense a "person". There is something sacred about the life of every individual. The sacred may be found in the existence of that characteristic of individual lives which has been so far forgotten, the "transfinite". The idealism which this mysticism engenders is the practical solution of many of the economical, and social disorders of the day.

The realization that there are some qualities of "otherness" in every personality situation dismisses permanently the validity of hopelessness. There is, according to this type of thinking, no situation, which, as a personality situation, can logically be considered to be hopeless.

In the above position there is a certain degree of difficulty if we do not realize the definite place desire and will hold in individual life. The entire personal motivation fails when the individual has lost the desire to achieve personality. This desire must naturally be bolstered by a will to achieve the ever increasing values of the evolution of personality in the life of man. The incitement of any kind of mysticism can be little understood by those who do not use the will to desire

and understand. When the experiences of mysticism degrade into mystery and when mysticism has fallen into occultism we find a lack upon the part of man to desire and will the achievements of personal mysticism.

A will to achieve means a constant effort and not a seance. One who truly wills to achieve a personality finds the insistent demand for the best of his capacities in mental ability, in moral living and in tolerant social attitudes. This is not a "mystery-ism" but a mysticism which demands constant practical effort. The idea of the "transfinite" together with the ideas of the relationship between God and man, and the aid given both fail in meaning and worth at the place where moral effort and proper adjustments in social life fail. Mysticism and the ideas of "otherness" are aids to practical living in that they give inspiration and vision to the supreme worth of living. They do not act as substitutes for moral effort.

The manner in which one wills and strives, and the amount of effort expended to attain a growing understanding and appreciation for personality values, largely locates one in the evolving gradation of personality achievement. Barring all purely mental and physical handicaps a great number of people fail to achieve any degree of contentment in personality values because of the fact that they do not

strive with sufficient persistence. Regression in personality appreciation comes as the direct result of an inability, due to a lack of effort to achieve in some realm of personality endeavor. One who steals, one who only knows selfish desire, one who is not just, one who fails to see the hopefullness of life, serve as examples of retrogression due to lack of effort. Many of the social ills in which we find ourselves are the result of the unwillingness of individual and collective man to strive, through a will which will demand real effort to achieve proper adjustment. The ~~raising or the~~ lowering of the standards of civilization ~~are~~ *is* the direct result of either the lack of effort, or, ~~effort willingly~~ *forced and unwilling effort* ~~expended, as the case may be.~~

An individual's place in the gradation of personality then comes as the result of effort or lack of effort. The present tendencies towards moral laxity in society which has been attributed to overproduction, unstableness in industry or to political and social greed should perhaps be attributed to the absence of effort to achieve the personality values of fairness and honesty in society, in the economic, in industrial and the political order. The need in our social order today seems to be the evolution in society of those principles of personality

attributes. This can only be accomplished by a determined will which is upheld by constant effort at "rightness" in all social contacts. Because of the tremendous taks of accomplishment in these fields, it would seem that individual man and the social group might fail unless an appeal be made to the strength coming through the appreciation of the individuals "transfinite" relationship to the transendent "self", or the highest in personality, God.

IV.

Conclusion

Finding in life the truths of personality gives to man an "otherness", a purpose in living which lifts him above the difficulties in his own individual life, and, gives him courage to aid in the proper adjustment of social problems. Such an attitude upon the part of the individual cannot come into existence until the mystical reality in life is found and made a part of oneself.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bennett, Charles A.:

The Dilemma of Religious Knowledge, Yale Univ. Press, New Haven, Conn.

Bowne, Borden Parker:
Personalism, Houghton Mifflin Co., Mass., 1908.

Brinton, Howard:
The Mystic Will. Macmillan and Co., N. Y., 1930.

Burnet, John:
Greek Philosophy, Part I Thales to Plato, Macmillan and Co., London, 1924.

Carr, Herbert Wilton:
The Unique Status of Man, Macmillan and Co., 1928.

Davies and Vaughn:
The Republic of Plato, Macmillan and Co., N. Y., 1929.

Dewar and Hudson:
Psychology for Religious Workers, Ray Long and Richard R. Smith, Inc., 1932.

Dewey, John:
Human Nature and Conduct, Henry Holt and Co., N. Y. 1922.

Fox, Charles:
Educational Psychology, Harcourt Bruce and Co., N. Y. , 1926.

Groves, Ernest R.:
Personality and Social Adjustment, Langman's, Green and Co., 1923.

Hartshorne, Hugh:
Character in Human Relations, Chas. Scrivner's Sons, N. Y., 1932.

Hingley, R. H.:
Psychoanalysis, Dodd, Mead and Co., N. Y., 1922.

Holt, E. B.:
The Freudian Wish and Its Place in Ethics, Henry Holt and Co., N. Y., 1915.

James, William:
Variety of Religious Experience, Langman's, Green and Co., 1902.

King, William P.:
Humanism, Another Battle Line, Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn., 1931.

Lippmann, Walter:
A Preface to Morals, Macmillan and Co., 1929.

McConnell, Francis John:
Is God Limited?, The Abingdon Press, N. Y., 1924.

More, Paul Elmer:
Platonism, Princeton Univ. Press, 1917.

Pratt, James B.:
The Religious Consciousness, Macmillan and Co., N. Y., 1920.

Santayana, George:
Platonism and the Spiritual Life, Chas. Scribner's Sons, N. Y., 1927.

Shand, A. F.:
The Foundation of Character, Macmillan and Co., London, 1914.

Skinner, Gast and Skinner:
Readings in Educational Psychology, D. Appleton and Co., 1926.

Streeter, Burnett Hillman:
Reality, Macmillan and Co., 1926.

Weatherhead, Leslie Dixon
Psychology in the Service of Souls,
Epworth Press, London, 1929

Whitehead, A. N.:
Process and Reality, Macmillan and Co., 1929.

Wieman, Henry Nelson:
The Issues of Life, The Abingdon Press, N. Y., 1930.

Vaughn, Richard Miner:
The Significance of Personality, Macmillan Co., 1930.

DATE DUE

FEB 14 2013	

DEMCO, INC. 38-2931

GTU Library
3 2400 00687 2760

LIBRARY USE ONLY